

San José State University
Department of Economics
ECON 001B: Principles of Economics—Microeconomics
Section 03—Class Number 27047
Spring 2019

Instructor:	Mark Brady
Office Location:	DMH 144
Telephone:	408-924-5419
Email:	Mark.Brady@sjsu.edu / jmarkbrady@gmail.com
Office Hours:	TuTh 12:00 - 12:30 PM; and by appointment TuWTh
Class Days/Time:	TuTh 10:30 - 11:45 AM
Classroom:	DMH 161
Prerequisites:	May be taken prior to ECON 1A

Course Description (from the catalog)

Allocation of resources and distribution of income as affected by the workings of the price system and by government policies.

Course of Study

First we look at seven big ideas in economics and some key concepts in microeconomics (price theory). These include opportunity cost, absolute and comparative advantage, and specialization and the gains from trade; economic calculation, central planning, and the role of markets and prices in coordinating exchange; supply and demand analysis; elasticity and its applications; taxes and subsidies; and price ceilings and price floors. We then explore such topics as externalities; competition, monopoly, and price discrimination; the economics of labor markets and discrimination; public goods and the tragedy of the commons; and some issues in public policy. Throughout the course, we apply economic analysis to understand the world around us.

Course Goals and Learning Objectives

The goal is to promote both economic understanding and application (Econ SLO 1 & 2). Specifically, students are expected to gain familiarity with analytical methods and model-based argument; and relationships between verbal, graphical, mathematical and statistical representations of economic ideas and analysis (Econ SLO 1.3).

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students should have an understanding of the principal ideas in microeconomics, including

- **why incentives matter** (law of demand; law of supply; rational decision makers weight marginal costs versus marginal benefits; the power of self-interest)
- **opportunity cost** (sunk costs; production possibilities; the free-lunch fallacy; tradeoffs in consumption and production; gains from interpersonal and international trade; comparative advantage)
- **supply and demand** (understanding the S&D model as a representation of individual choices in exchange based on individual preferences, knowledge and circumstances; ability to examine current events using S&D tools; movement versus shift; welfare analysis)

Required Texts/Readings

Required Text

Our textbook is Tyler Cowen and Alex Tabarrok, *Modern Principles: Microeconomics*. The fourth edition (2018) is the most recent and costs more, but the buy-back price is higher. If you're short of money, buy either the third edition (2015) or the second edition (2013), but avoid the first edition (2010), which is significantly different. Or you may choose to rent the e-text of the third or fourth edition. (Please note that I customarily refer to the chapter numbers, and I'll be sure to mention where they differ between editions.)

Make sure that you are buying the **Micro** and not the Macro text. I've had students buy the wrong book. Of course, you would never do that!

And be aware that anyone can access the authors' website *Marginal Revolution University* at <http://www.mruniversity.com> and watch hundreds of short videos for free. Why not check it out this weekend?

Other Readings

I distribute a few handouts that I expect you to read alongside the textbook.

Course Requirements and Assignments

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities.” More details about student workload can be found in University Policy S16-9, Course Syllabi at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>.

There are four components to your grade: three examinations (60%), fifteen best quizzes (30%), a term paper (10%), and strictly limited extra credit.

- There are two shorter **exams (Tuesday, February 26, and Tuesday, March 26)**, which emphasize what we have covered since the previous exam and are worth 15% and 20% respectively. The final comprehensive examination (**Thursday, May 16, 9:45 AM – 12:00 PM**) is worth 25%. All three examinations consist entirely of multiple choice questions.

- There are at least 30 objective **quizzes** worth a total of 30 points. Each quiz is worth two points, allowing students to drop or miss at least fifteen quizzes. Quiz scores are calculated pro rata so that 10/10 on a quiz is worth two points, and 5/10 is worth one point. **There are no make-ups for any quizzes.**

Many quizzes, including the first four, are based on my lectures. Others are based on chapters from Cowen and Tabarrok, *Modern Principles: Microeconomics*, and test your knowledge of key concepts. And one quiz is based on a video *Adam Smith and the Wealth of Nations* that we watch together in class after the first exam.

- I'll talk about the **term paper** that is worth up to 10% of your final grade on **Tuesday, March 19**, and distribute detailed instructions at that time. Your finished paper is due by **6 PM on Tuesday, April 16**.

The SJSU Writing Center opens for the spring semester from Monday, January 28. Appointment Hours (Library, 2nd Floor): Monday-Thursday 10:00 AM - 7:00 PM; Friday 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM. Drop-in Hours (Clark Hall 126): Monday-Thursday 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM. And you can schedule appointments online at <https://sjsu.mywconline.com/>

Grading Policy

Converting number grades to letter grades

95-100	A+	90-94	A	85-89	A-
80-84	B+	75-79	B	70-74	B-
65-69	C+	60-64	C	55-59	C-
50-54	D+	45-49	D	40-44	D-
		0-39	F		

Although I expect to grade on a curve, I also take into account your absolute performance (as compared with your performance relative to other students) and, if everyone does first-rate work, I'd be delighted to award everyone an A.

I am happy to help you. If you experience any difficulty in this course, please do not hesitate to come to me for help. I am available not only during office hours but also by email and phone, and I am always happy to clarify difficult concepts, resolve any lingering confusion, or otherwise assist you in making this course enjoyable and rewarding.

Classroom Protocol

Class attendance is not mandatory and will not directly affect a student's grade. However, students who miss several classes, in addition to dropping quizzes, will very likely consign themselves to doing extremely poorly on their examinations. I therefore strongly encourage students to attend fully every class.

University Policies <http://info.sjsu.edu/> <http://www.sjsu.edu/students/>

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's Catalog Policies section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic calendar web page at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/academic_affairs/resources/academic_calendars/. The Late Drop Policy is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the Advising Hub at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

University Policy S12-7, <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course.

“Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.”

“Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”

Academic integrity

Your commitment as a student to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The University's Academic Integrity policy, located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-7.pdf>, requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The Student Conduct and Ethical Development website is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include your assignment or any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy S07-2 requires approval of instructors.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the Accessible Education Center (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec/> to establish a record of their disability.